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Wed, Mar 19, 2008 at 2:05 AM



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(for immediate release – Tuesday, March 11, 2008)

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## Gov. Togiola's arrives at Rose Island: Day 1

(UTULEI) - Governor Togiola Tulafono arrived this morning at Rose Atoll, after a 17 hour trip on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) marine research ship - Hi'ialakai from Pago Pago.

In the morning, Governor Togiola visited Rose Island with Mr. Don Palawski, refuge manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Pacific Remote Islands National Wildlife Refuge, where he expressed his delight on visiting the only island of American Samoa that he has not visited since he has been governor.

"I am very grateful for the opportunity to make this once in a lifetime kind of visit to Rose Atoll, the 7th island of the Territory of American Samoa notwithstanding its status as a US National Wildlife Refuge," said Governor Togiola, who departed Pago Pago with NOAA scientists on the Hi'ialakai at 1pm yesterday (Monday). "The natural beauty of Rose Island within Rose Atoll is truly amazing and I am very blessed to have made this trip."

Governor Togiola said he walked all the way around Rose Island, which is located inside the reef of the atoll, where they found a partially buried cement monument, which is believed to be the monument erected by Naval Governor Warren Jay Terhune on January 10, 1920. (*Governor Terhune revisited Rose Island on June 5, 1920, and committed suicide at Government House at Maugaoali'i on November 3, 1920.*)

"We started to dig it out of the sand, but the cement structure was too big for us to dig up, so we will try again tomorrow (Wednesday) with more manpower," said Governor Togiola.

In the afternoon, Governor Togiola snorkeled around the island with NOAA Chief Scientist Rusty Brainard, observed the NOAA scientists at work, and saw green giant clams (faisua) for the first time.

"It already has been a remarkable experience to observe the NOAA team at work," said Governor Togiola. "The reef is beautiful and amazing and I truly appreciate the significance of this area of the Territory, and I've never seen green faisua before. Rose Island is an amazing place."

Governor Togiola said, tomorrow (Wednesday), scientists will continue their survey of the atoll and he hopes that the group can team up to dig up the cement monument.

Governor Togiola is scheduled to return to Tutuila on Thursday evening.

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